April 25, 1950.

Dr. T. M. Sonneborn,
Dept. Zoology,
Indiana University,
Bloomington, Indiana.

Dear Tracy:

Thank you for your comment on Miss Cahn. Davis has spoken very highly of her, and I hope that we can find a place for her here.

Concerning the possibility of leaving Wisconsin, I hope that the ottcome of the negotiations with Chicago is not going to insulate me from hearing of good opportunities elsewhere. I have been fairly content here - enjoy living in Madison, and have developed a pretty good working relationship with people in and out of the Genetics department, so I am not especially anxious to leave, nor to encouraginquiries that are not likely to be fruitful. I hope that we can get together sometime before too long, to talk about this. In the meantime, I think that Indiana is not likely to value my services to the point where it would be worthwhile to go through the dislocation of moving. In about two years, probably, I will be thinking much more seriously about whether to try to stay at Wisconsin indefinitely, or to find a definitive berth somewhere else.

Sincerely,

Joshua Lederberg

Of course, I will be glad to consider any offer, but if possible, I think it would be better to postpone such a discussion,for a year or two, when I suspect I may be able to give it more serious consideration. I realize, of course, that your Bacteriology Department has an immediate problem, which I hope it can solve satisfactorily. In any case, however, I wonder I would be the best possible person for the problem of teaching a general bacteriology or a bacterial physiology course, when my experience has been so much more along genetic lines.

I have some more to say about this, which you may be interested to hear, but most of it is best deferred for a private conversation.

I'm beginning to think that autogamy does occur, not too infrequently, in diploid K-12. I have some exceptional diploids which are Lac+ Mal+ Xyl+// Lac- Mal- Xyl-. Every once in a while, a colony turns up which is, say, pure for Mal-, but still segregating for Lac and/or for Xyl. These partial segregants are homozygous for Mal-, because, in this case, Mal+ reversions now segregate [Mal+/Mal-]. Different reversions are in one or other of the two phases of linkage, i.e., "repulsions" or coupling with, say, Xyl +/-. This helps to clear up the "double reduction" which most of the persistent diploids seem to have experienced before they are isolated, but we have no light yet on the mechanism of elimination which results in hemizygosity for various factors.